



**American  
Red Cross**

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## *News Release* **NEWS RELEASE**

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### **RED CROSS & COUNTY OFFICIALS ENCOURAGE RESIDENTS TO PREPARE FOR HURRICANE SEASON**

**FREDERICK, MD** – With hurricane season starting on June 1, the Frederick County Chapter of the American Red Cross joins with the Frederick County Division of Emergency Management and county partners to encourage families to review their general preparedness plans.

“The best time to prepare is now -- when we have no storms,” said Chapter Operations Supervisor Judy Peterson, Frederick County Red Cross. “The impact of coastal storms can reach inland to Frederick County. It will ease your mind knowing you have your family’s supplies and plans put together ahead of time.”

More than 35 million Americans live in regions most threatened by Atlantic hurricanes. Many residents of Frederick County vacation along the East Coast. Whether at home or on vacation, residents should be aware of the following preparedness steps:

1. Build a disaster supply kit or check the kit you prepared last year. Include a three-day supply of water and ready-to-eat non-perishable foods. Don’t forget a manual can opener, battery-powered radio, flashlight and extra batteries. The kit should also have a first aid kit, prescription and non-prescription medications, and copies of important documents.
2. Prepare a personal disaster and evacuation plan. Identify two meeting places -- one near home, and one outside the area in case you can’t return home. Make plans for pets. Select an out-of-area emergency contact person.
3. Be informed. Know what a hurricane WATCH means. If a hurricane WATCH is issued:
  - Listen to weather updates from a battery-powered or hand-cranked radio.
  - Bring in outdoor objects such as lawn furniture, hanging plants, bicycles, toys and garden tools. Anchor objects that cannot be brought inside.
  - Close all windows and doors.

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- Cover windows with storm shutters or pre-cut plywood.
- If time permits, and you live in an identified surge zone, elevate furniture or move it to a higher floor to protect it from flooding.
- Fill vehicle gas tanks.
- Check your disaster supply kit to make sure items have not expired.

If a hurricane WARNING is issued:

- Listen to the advice of local officials, and leave if they tell you to do so.
- Secure your home by unplugging appliances and turning off electricity and the main water valve. If you are not advised to evacuate, stay inside, away from windows, skylights and glass doors.
- Do NOT use open flames, such as candles and kerosene lamps, as a source of light.
- If power is lost, turn off appliances to reduce damage from a power surge when electricity is restored.

“Hurricane preparedness steps are the same steps residents should take to prepare for any disaster,” stated Director Jack Markey, Frederick County Emergency Management Division. “The beginning of hurricane season is a good reminder to review our preparedness plans.”

Keeping the public informed of any hazardous situation is a high priority of county emergency preparedness partners. Emergency messages will be broadcast from WFMD 930 AM, WFRE 99.9 FM, WAFY KEY 103.1 FM, Frederick County Government cable television channel 19, Frederick County Public Schools cable television channel 18, City of Frederick cable television channel 99, and NBC 25 WHAG TV.

For more information regarding how individuals and families can prepare for emergencies, contact the Frederick County Chapter of the American Red Cross at 301-662-5131 or visit [www.frederickredcross.org](http://www.frederickredcross.org).

For additional preparedness tips, visit the Frederick County Government website at [www.FrederickCountyMD.gov/emergency](http://www.FrederickCountyMD.gov/emergency), which contains a *Hurricane Fact Sheet*, or contact the Department of Emergency Preparedness at 301-600-1746 or via e-mail at [EmergencyManagement@FrederickCountyMD.gov](mailto:EmergencyManagement@FrederickCountyMD.gov).

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**About the American Red Cross:**

*The American Red Cross shelters, feeds and provides emotional support to victims of disasters; provides nearly half of the nation's blood; teaches lifesaving skills; provides international humanitarian aid; and supports military members and their families. The Red Cross is a charitable organization — not a government agency — and depends on volunteers and the generosity of the American public to perform its mission. For more information, visit [www.frederickredcross.org](http://www.frederickredcross.org).*